Showcase Your Shopfront!

EDINBURGH WORLD HERITAGE
Edinburgh is famous for its World Heritage Site, and shopfronts play a very important role in the city’s unique historic character.

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www.ewht.org.uk/shopfronts
A single high-quality shopfront can make a significant improvement to the streetscape; however, the most successful areas are those streets where the general shopfront design is of good quality - for instance Victoria Street. It’s easy to revitalise traditional architectural details which may now be hidden or neglected. This simple step can restore an architectural unity to the building and provide coherence to the overall shopfront design of the street, which has a knock-on beneficial effect on the wider area.

1. Trotters Ophthalmic Opticians in George Street – notice properly maintained architectural details representing glasses.
2. McLeish in the Old Town. A good example of a hanging sign, which could be used as an alternative to A-boards.
3. Special web content has been developed as a part of the “Showcase your shopfront” initiative to provide the public with more information and guidance about the project available on ewht.org.uk
4. St. Stephen Street. Appropriate use of colours, proportional lettering and fascia can bring vibrancy to the street and improve its perception from the street level.
5. Gilmours Close in Grassmarket - modern interpretation of historic signage, which corresponds with the architectural character and brings a fresh approach to advertising of the area.
6. Valvona Crolla in Elm Row – well maintained capital of a pilaster. One of the main issues is missing original architectural details of historic shopfronts, which amongst other factors define the aesthetic character of the street.
Sarah Connelly from *Odyssey Boutique, 39-41 William Street*

“the company has been here for a couple of years now and we have become accustomed to village life. The local folks welcome the relaxed and bohemian character of our boutique. The transparency of the shop windows allows close contact with the passing public and you can actually see them looking in through the windows...!”
Derek Umpherston, *Hawick - Cashmere of Scotland*, 71 Grassmarket: “the whole area has become more coherent now and customers feel like popping in more often after visiting the nearby restaurants and other facilities.”

Mr D. McKenzie of *Edinburgh Dry Cleaners*, 17-18 East Norton Place: “the large shop window and the shop facilities are very good now. Customers like to be able to look into the shop as everyone just wants quickly to pop in and out again.

7. William Street. An example of how the entire row of shopfronts within one tenement can be unified and improved. As a result shopowners form a retail community and one, strong characteristic shopping destination.

8. Hawick -Cashmere of Scotland, 71 Grassmarket before...

9. ...and after restoration.

10. Clarksons in Victoria Street. Pleasing colour scheme and effective display areas invite shoppers to spend money.

11. North Bridge Arcade before...

12. ...and after restoration.
What are the benefits of a well designed shop front?

- a positive shopping experience in an attractive area
- increased property value
- higher footfall and increased sales turnover
- creation of a shopping community, which includes those who buy and sell locally
- public safety
- attraction of new investment and, if managed properly, a sustainable mix of uses in a visually improved area.

13. Cruise in George Street – an example of a well maintained shopfront with several interesting sculptural details and positive improvements, which add vibrancy to the entire design.

14. The Red Door Gallery – an example of the introduction of storm doors as an aesthetically pleasing security measure.

15. Smith & Mullan Architects in Leith Walk – successful modern interpretation of historic shopfront. Notice part of the original fascia, which has been kept.
Even if there are no historic architectural details left on a shopfront they can either be reinstated or the shopfront enhanced with a sympathetic design. Well-designed modern shopfronts (such as this contemporary interpretation of an historic shopfront in Leith Walk) will equally improve the shopping experience and their surroundings.

Security measures may be necessary but they don't have to be unattractive or a magnet for antisocial behaviour. There are a number of traditional safety measures, such as original shutters or storm doors which can be used without compromising the architectural quality of a shopfront. Outside business hours, window shopping becomes an important element for attracting customer interest in local businesses. Window shoppers help to establish a safer environment and a better sense of community at night time (because of improved security due to increased pedestrian activity). The customer flows increase and become more sophisticated as the area becomes more welcoming, which leads to increased profits.
Edinburgh World Heritage (EWH) offers repayable interest free grants through its ongoing Conservation Funding Programme, which may cover up to 75% of the eligible cost. For commercial properties, where the title is in the name of a company or a partnership, repayments will be due at the end of a fixed term of ten years.

**What we can fund**

- shopfronts within the EWH Conservation Funding Boundary
- reinstatement of original architectural features

**What will it cost?**

Costs will vary according to the scale of works required to enhance each particular shopfront. A seriously neglected shopfront will require more restoration work than one which benefits from regular and appropriate maintenance. EWH provides advice on how shopfront improvements can eligible for funding. The process will involve the appointment of qualified professionals to assess the costs and prepare the design for the shopfront. EWH will grant aid professional fees, up to an agreed limit, depending on the type and scope of work.
**What we cannot fund**

- replacement of historic shopfronts with a modern design
- routine maintenance and minor repairs
- properties located outside the World Heritage Site administrative boundary however a case can be made to us, see map at www.ewht.org.uk
- alterations and private interior work
- demolitions
- upgrading of services
- underground drainage
- stonecleaning
- work already under way
- exceptionally we fund properties outside the Boundary, especially along the key routes to the World Heritage Site identified on the map in this brochure.

**Want to apply?**

Download the application form and detailed guidance notes from the EWH website, or e-mail us for a copy. Also have a look at examples of successfully restored shopfronts on our website, www.ewht.org.uk/shopfronts

**Map Key**

- Buildings in need
- Routes - High Priority
- Routes - Low Priority
- Regeneration
- EWH Conservation Funding Boundary
Alterations to shop frontages often require planning permission, consent to display an advertisement and, if the building is listed, listed building consent. City of Edinburgh Council – Planning can provide information on whether these would be required for your property and the type of information you would need to include in any application.

The fees for applications for advertisement consent and planning permission for alternations to a shop front are currently both £160 (December 2010). There is no fee for applications for listed building consent.

Guidance on the type of design which Planning will seek is available from www.edinburgh.gov.uk/directory_record/10993/commercial_frontages. This includes guidance on the more stringent requirements for listed buildings and conservation areas.

Do you need planning permission?

18. Relove – St. Stephen Street. Maximum glazing of door and window helps to display the products to best effect. Authentic ironmongery details add to the quality of the shopping experience.

19. The Scottish Storytelling Centre. Demonstrates the successful mix of residential and commercial in the typical tenement building in the historical town.
Historic Scotland has created a short guide providing more information for shop owners about:

- the importance of their historic shopfront
- the type of shopfront they have depending on the period of construction
- architectural details of shopfront's construction
- how historic shopfronts should be maintained
- acceptable alterations.

We recommend that you familiarise yourself with this guide before seeking funding for restoration work. It is available on Historic Scotland’s website at, www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/shopfronts.pdf

“Traditional features add interest and variety and can make a shopfront distinctive. These are an asset to a retail business and should be retained”

Historic Scotland’s - Traditional Shopfronts, a short guide for shop owners.
Edinburgh World Heritage – availability of grants
T: 0131 220 7720
info@ewht.org.uk

City of Edinburgh Council Planning – planning and design guidance
T: 0131 529 6127
ross.middleton@edinburgh.gov.uk

Historic Scotland – technical guidance
T: 0131 668 8668
hs.technicalconservationgroup@scotland.gov.uk

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